Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Implementation of Sections 309(j) and 337 of the Communications Act of 1934 as Amended	)	WT Docket No. 99-87
	)	
	)	
Promotion of Spectrum Efficient Technologies On Certain Part 90 Frequencies	)	RM-9332
	)	

To: Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

COMMENTS
OF
ICOM AMERICA, INC.

Icom America, Inc. ("Icom"), pursuant to the Public Notice released by the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau on September 26, 2016, hereby respectfully submits its Comments in the above-referenced proceeding.[1] As discussed herein, Icom opposes the relief requested.

I. BACKGROUND

a. Icom America, Inc.

Icom America's parent company, Icom, Inc., was founded in 1954 by Tokuzo Inoue in Osaka, Japan. Icom, Incorporated is a publicly held Japanese corporation; its stock is traded on the Tokyo and Osaka Stock Exchange. Icom, Inc. began as an engineering and manufacturing company in the business of designing, engineering, and manufacturing highly advanced, compact solid-state radio equipment for use in the Amateur industry. The company's product line has since expanded to include communications equipment and products based in the Marine, Avionics and Land Mobile industries.

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[1] DA 16-1087, released September 26, 2016.

Icom Inc. has sales offices and branch offices all over the world, including Australia, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Spain, Canada and the United States. Icom America is Icom Inc.'s largest subsidiary company and is the U.S. distributor for its products. Icom America was incorporated in October of 1979 and has continued to gain market share in each of its five major divisions: Amateur, Aviation, Land Mobile, Marine and Receivers.

b. **Land Mobile**:

Icom joined the land mobile industry approximately thirty years ago. This equipment is used in such areas as fire, public safety activities, as well as security, construction and farming communication. Icom currently supplies the radio system used by the U.S. Army for inter-squad communication known as the Soldier Intercom System.

Icom has taken steps to improve spectrum availability for public safety licensees in the 150 MHz band. Specifically, on June 16, 2004, Icom filed a Petition for Rule Making with the Commission which sought to re-allocate the presently unused 150 MHz Part 22 channels to public safety operation. Icom was also one of the first manufacturers to provide 6.25 kHz capable equipment in an effort to meet the original narrowbanding mandate.

c. **Amateur/Aviation/Marine/IP Transceivers**:

Icom is one of the only remaining companies to design and provide industry leading Amateur, Aviation, Marine and most recently IP transceiver products. Icom's reputation for innovation and quality in the three radio categories is recognized worldwide with many North American industry awards being furnished on Icom over the years. Icom is also an active participant in multiple industry bodies for these product categories providing expertise and guidance in standards making among other active contributions to the two-way radio industry.

In this proceeding, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (the "Bureau"), is requesting comments on the Waiver Request submitted by the International Municipal Signal Association ("IMSA") on August 19, 2016. IMSA requests that the Commission waive the requirement in Section 90.203(j)(4-(5) of its Rules to require that applications for type acceptance of certain Part 90 land mobile radio equipment have 6.25 kHz (or equivalent efficiency) bandwidth capability. The 6.25 kHz requirement became effective on January 1, 2015, after a similar request was submitted by Ritron, Inc. on September 21, 2012, to delay the deadline.

Icom opposes the Waiver Request. As discussed herein, IMSA's concerns are, at best, speculative and contrary to FCC mandated policy in effect for over 10 years. Since implementation of the requirement, radios available in the bands requiring 6.25 kHz capability have proliferated, without much increase in cost derived from further advances in technology and natural market competition.

II. COMMENTS

As IMSA proposal correctly states, vendors, licensees, system operators and frequency coordinators have had 20 years to prepare for narrowbanding. Licensing statistics for digital emission designators demonstrate that tens of thousands of users have already deployed 6.25 kHz technology. It is not clear to Icom how many users will benefit from a further fourth extension, compared to those that will benefit from the continued voluntary migration to 6.25 kHz spectrum efficiency.

Icom appreciates the concern expressed for the burden on vendors, however many vendors, like Icom, attempted to met the original 2005 deadline for narrowbanding and now supply 6.25kHz or equivalent equipment. These manufacturers would not benefit from

extending the deadline for a fourth time after they have made the investment in research, completed the engineering, and brought compliant products to market. Any burden on the major US vendors has already been sustained and a further delay would not mitigate the burden in any way.

Continued investment by vendors, resource allocation and, most of all, natural market competition has resulted in 6.25 kHz pricing that is equivalent to analog equipment available before narrowbanding. There has been no demonstrated increase in equipment costs presented in the IMSA proposal and our observations are there have been none. In fact, the opposite may be true. For the traditional price of analog equipment, customers are now may receive increased capabilities of digital technology performing applications never before imagined.

Icom supports the recent FCC ruling that public safety should utilize equipment with analog FM capabilities on the interoperability channels. Almost all 6.25 kHz radios include analog capability as well, providing interoperability in the analog mode of operation. The Commission has clearly established Project 25 as the digital interoperability standard for public safety radios, and with over 2,000 Project 25 systems installed nationwide, it is clearly the accepted digital interoperability standard of the public safety community. Organizations like the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council ("NPSTC") continue to emphasize Project 25 interoperability and Statewide Interoperability Coordinators ("SWICS") use Project 25 technology as the cornerstone of their planning. Other 6.25 kHz digital technologies are no threat to this accepted interoperability solution and they have found their place mainly in the Business and Industrial market.

In addition, the Commission should refrain from mandating a single 6.25 kHz technology. Licensing statistics show that the market has accepted two digital technologies,

NXDN™ and DMR, in roughly the same proportion. Choosing one technology over the other as the 6.25 kHz standard would force half of the current users to convert, with no apparent benefit and significant cost and inconvenience.[2]

There is no rationale for requiring a single 6.25 kHz standard. Doing so would disenfranchise tens of thousands of users which have already chosen and implemented one of the two dominant 6.25 kHz transmission technologies, with absolutely no benefit to users. Indeed, the FCC narrowbanding Order specifically states that the requirement that "6.25kHz or equivalent" technology is required, automatically allowing a choice of technological implementation to comply with the Order. It should also be added that these users have installed these 6.25 kHz standard based systems under the FCC mandate to do so starting with the original deadline of January 1, 2005.

III. CONCLUSION

Since the 1990's, most electronic industries have made the digital transition. The pros and cons have always been debated, but the inexorable transition continued and the public benefitted accordingly with a better form factor, increased energy efficiency, increased spectrum efficiency and an enormous increase in value versus product features. The two-way radio industry has now successfully begun its analog-to-digital transition and must continue as spectrum is becoming scarcer. -The convergence with IP, which is more easily achieved in the digital domain, is one example of the large technological jump land mobile radio has achieved as a result of the necessity to comply with narrowbanding. Further delay in 6.25 kHz compliance would be a reverse step in this technological advancement as well. WHEREFORE, the premises

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[2] It may be helpful, however, if the FCC clarified that a "date certain" for mandatory user migration to 6.25 kHz technology if not in the offing.

considered, it is respectfully requested that the Commission DENY the Waiver Request submitted by the International Municipal Signal Association.

Respectfully submitted,

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